

patent prosecution costs that would be necessarily involved for the Applicants to pursue full protection for the related but distinct aspects of their invention if a four-way restriction requirement is maintained. For example, Applicants are entitled to "small entity" status, and the additional patent prosecution costs may be prohibitive for the Applicants to pursue the appropriate scope of protection to which they believe they are entitled. Any consideration the Examiner may give to the Applicants in this regard would be greatly appreciated.

Reconsideration of the four-way restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

Subject to the foregoing request for reconsideration, in response to the restriction requirement the Applicants elect the subject matter of Group I, including at least originally-filed Claims 1-7 and 20, and the subject matter of at least Claims 22-31 and 33-39, which have been amended to be within the subject matter of Group I. Applicants respectfully urge that all the pending claims, as amended, can be examined in this application without undue burden on the Examiner.

To the extent prosecution of any such non-elected subject matter may be foreclosed in this application by the Examiner's final action on this reconsideration of the pending restriction requirement, Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications for patent directed to any of the non-elected subject matter based on the originally-filed disclosure and the originally-filed claims in this application.

REMARKS

A minor correction to the dependency of Claim 38 is also made by this preliminary amendment. No new matter has been added to any of the claims.

If a telephone conference might expedite the reconsideration of the four-way restriction requirement or other prosecution of this application, the undersigned would appreciate a telephone conference and can normally be reached at the telephone number listed below.

DATED: November 25, 1998

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Respectfully submitted,

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